



EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT NEWS
The Monthly Electronic Newsletter of
Homeland Security and Emergency Management
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HSEM Director Christopher M. Pope (right) consults with agency command staff in the new state Emergency Operations Center during the Ardent Sentry exercise.

REGIONAL EXERCISE ENVISIONS MAJOR HURRICANE STRIKE – A Category 3 hurricane struck New Hampshire full force during the first week of May, bringing fatalities and widespread destruction to the state and most of New England. If you didn't notice, that was because Hurricane Yvette was imaginary, part of Ardent Sentry, a week-long exercise involving emergency management agencies and National Guard from all six New England states. For New Hampshire, it was also the shakedown for the state's new Emergency Operations Center. By all accounts, the new facility worked well, providing much more working space for HSEM staff and liaisons from the Guard, State Police and the departments of Transportation, Environmental Services and Health and Human Services. The towns of Rye, Hampton Falls, Hampton and Rindge also participated. The federal government was represented by the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the departments of Homeland Security and Defense. A detailed after-action report is being prepared to evaluate the exercise.

The exercise was designed as a worst-case scenario disaster to stress the region's emergency response to the limit. The Hurricane of 1938 would have been a Category 3 storm.

HSEM MOVES TO NEW HEADQUARTERS – Imagine starting school in a new building and moving all at the same time. That's a little what it was like on Friday, May 18th, as N.H. Homeland Security and Emergency Management packed up and left Johnson Hall after more than 20 years, and moved to a new building on the grounds of the N.H. Fire Academy. The State Operations and Communications Center (SOCC) is its new home. The State Fire Marshal and Department of Transportation Traffic Management Center have already moved in. A new E-911 call center and State Police Dispatch Center will also be housed in the new building when their facilities are completed.

The HSEM phone number, 271-2231, remains the same, as do all the 223 exchange inside numbers. The FAX line is now 223-3609. Staff e-mail addresses will be changing, although the old ones will continue to work for a while. The new e-mail addresses are: First.Last@hsem.nh.gov.

RECOVERY FROM APRIL NOR'EASTER CONTINUES – Recovery operations are continuing from the April 2007 Nor'easter, the third major storm to strike New Hampshire in less than two years. While the latest storm was notable primarily for the river and stream flooding it caused, it also brought coastal flooding and high winds. The state received a federal disaster declaration for Public Assistance for all counties except Coös and for Individual Assistance for Grafton, Hillsborough, Merrimack, Rockingham and Strafford counties. Coös County was later added for Public Assistance and Belknap County was added for Individual Assistance. Thus far, \$2,747,202 has been approved in federal aid to individuals. The U.S. Small Business Administration has approved 57 low interest loans to homeowners and businesses, totaling \$2,130,000. Requests for Public Assistance have been received from 201 communities and other entities.

ANNUAL PREPAREDNESS CONFERENCE COMING UP – New Hampshire's third annual local emergency preparedness conference is scheduled for Monday, June 18th, at the Radisson Hotel in Manchester. The title of this year's all-day meeting is "Working Together: Effective Strategies for Emergency Planning, Response and Recovery." Individual workshops will be held on Continuity of Operations Planning (COOP), Legal Concerns in Emergency Preparedness, School Emergency Management Planning, Points of Distribution (POD) Planning and much more. For more information and registration call 603-573-3306. Registration is due by June 13th.

HURRICANE SEASON GETS EARLY START – The Atlantic hurricane season doesn't start until June 1st, but that didn't stop the season's first named storm from jumping the gun. Subtropical storm Andrea formed in the Atlantic three weeks early. The storm didn't pose a threat to land, but it was a good reminder of what might be headed our way later this season.

This year's Atlantic hurricane season is predicted to be an active one. August and September are the most likely months for hurricanes to reach New England.

N.E. SUMMER POWER SUPPLY EXPECTED TO BE ADEQUATE – New England's electric power supply is expected to meet high summer demand, despite the possibility of another demand record, according to the region's power grid operator. Officials of ISO-New England, based in Holyoke, Mass., said demand could reach another record peak during hot and humid weather. But they said conservation and other measures would ensure that the load will be met. The all-time record demand for power in the region was 28,127 megawatts, set on August 2nd, 2006. Grid officials forecast peak demand of 27,360 megawatts this summer under normal conditions of about 90 degrees. But they say an extended period of temperatures of 95 degrees could drive power usage to 29,160 megawatts.

VY SHUT DOWN FOR REFUELING AND MAINTENANCE – Vermont Yankee was shut down May 13th for a scheduled 30-day outage for refueling and maintenance. VY has completed 26 operating cycles, each lasting 18 months. During refueling, technicians will perform tests and inspections on nearly all parts of the plant and carry out valve and pump motor replacements and switchyard work. The plant operated continuously during the most recent operating cycle, which began in November 2005.

Vermont Yankee's Combined Functional Drill #1 was scheduled for April 18th, but the exercise had to be postponed due to the April nor'easter. It has been rescheduled for June 21st.

COMMERCE DEPARTMENT HONORS FORECASTERS – The U.S. Department of Commerce has awarded its Joint Organization Bronze Medal to forecasters in the Northeast for their work during the October 2005 flood. The medal was presented May 11th to the National Weather Service forecast offices in Albany, N.Y., Gray, Maine; Mt. Holly, N.J., and Taunton, Mass., the Middle Atlantic River Forecast Center and the Northeast River Forecast Center. The forecasters' efforts provided emergency managers with advance warnings and forecasts of three back-to-back rainstorms that resulted in rainfalls of 12-24 inches, causing widespread flooding in New Hampshire and throughout the Northeast.

TWO JOIN HSEM STAFF – Two new employees have joined the staff of N.H. Homeland Security and Emergency Management. Kelly Garfield is on the support staff of the Tech Hazards section and Heidi Lawton is the new field representative for Coös County. Welcome aboard to both.